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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/517,212	12/08/2004	Jean-Marie Basset	01435.0199	5701
22852 7590 08/13/2007 FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER LLP 901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413			EXAMINER NGUYEN, HUY TRAM	
			ART UNIT 1709	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 08/13/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/517,212

Applicant(s)

BASSET ET AL.

Examiner

Huy-Tram Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6-19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date December 8, 2004.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Objections

Claims 6-19 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot depend on any other multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims 6-19 are not been further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Basset et al. (WO 01/04077 A1)**.

Regarding Claim 1, Basset et al. reference discloses a process for producing ethane (**Examples 4,5 and 6**), characterized in that it comprises bringing methane into contact with a metal catalyst selected from metal hydrides, metal organic compounds and mixtures thereof (**Page 2, Line 8-13**).

Regarding Claim 2, Basset et al. reference discloses the process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the metal catalyst comprises at least one metal, Me,

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chosen from the lanthanides, the actinides and the metals from Groups 2 to 12, preferably 3 to 12, of the Periodic Table of the Elements (**Page 5, Line 12-14 – transition metals**).

Regarding Claim 3, Basset et al. reference discloses the process for the conversion of methane to carbon-containing products (**Examples 4, 5, 6 and 7 and 8**) characterized in that methane is brought into contact with a metal catalyst comprising at least one metal, Me, chosen from the lanthanides, the actinides and the metals from Groups 2 to 12, preferably 3 to 12, of the Periodic Table of the Elements (**Page 5, Line 12-14**), so as to produce ethane in a proportion of at least 65% by weight with respect to carbon-containing products formed in the process (**Page 12, Table 1**).

Regarding Claim 4, Basset et al. reference discloses the process according to Claim 3, characterized in that ethane is produced in a proportion of at least 70%, preferably of at least 80%, in particular of at least 90%, 2 5 especially of at least 95%, more especially of at least 98% or 99%, by weight with respect to carbon-containing products formed in the process (**Page 12, Table 1, Column 2 – 67 – 94%**).

Regarding Claim 5, Basset et al. reference discloses the process according to Claim 3 or 4, characterized in that the metal catalyst is chosen from metal hydrides, metal organic compounds and mixtures thereof (**Page 2, Line 8-13**).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Huy-Tram Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-270-

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3167. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F: 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM (Alternated Friday off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Walter Griffin can be reached on 571-272-1447. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

HTN
7/31/07


WALTER D. GRIFFIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER